



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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State Health Department Warns Residents of Dangers Due To Recalled Window Coverings

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is urging residents to examine window blinds and shades in their homes to see if they are among those involved in a national safety recall, according to Dawn Mayer of the department's Division of Injury Prevention and Control.

On Dec. 15, 2009, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the Window Covering Safety Council (WCSC) announced a voluntary recall to repair all roll-up blinds and Roman shades to prevent the risk of strangulation to young children. The recall involves millions of roll-up blinds and Roman shades. About 5 million Roman shades and about 3 million roll-up blinds are sold each year.

Retail stores in North Dakota that sold the blinds from 1998 to the present include J.C. Penny, Wal-Mart, Ace Hardware and Big Lots. Other retailers selling the blinds include Pottery Barn, Pottery Barn Kids, Ross Stores, specialty window covering dealers, West Elm catalogs and PBteen catalogs. To determine if blinds are recalled, visit the CPSC website www.cpsc.gov or call the CPSC Recall Hotline at 800.638.2772.

CPSC has received reports of five deaths and 16 near-strangulations related to Roman shades since 2006 and three deaths related to roll-up blinds since 2001. Strangulations related to Roman shades can occur when a child places his or her neck between the exposed inner cord and the fabric on the backside of the blind or when a child pulls the cord out and wraps it around his or her neck. Strangulations related to roll-up blinds can occur if the lifting loop slides off the side of the blind and a child's neck becomes entangled on the free-standing loop or if a child places his or her neck between the lifting loop and the roll-up blind material.

Consumers who have Roman shades or roll-up blinds in their homes should contact the WCSC immediately at www.windowcoverings.org or by calling 800.506.4636 anytime to receive a free repair kit.

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Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.

To help prevent child strangulation in window coverings, CPSC, WCSC and the North Dakota Department of Health urge parents and caregivers to follow these guidelines:

- **Examine all shades and blinds in the home.** Make sure there are no accessible cords on the front, side or back of the product. CPSC, WCSC and the North Dakota Department of Health recommend the use of cordless window coverings in all homes where children live or visit.
- Do not place cribs, beds or other furniture close to the windows because children can climb on them and gain access to the cords.
- Make loose cords inaccessible.
- If the window shade has looped bead chains or nylon cords, install tension devices to keep the cord taut.

List of Voluntary Recalls To Repair Roman Shades and Roll Up Blinds

Company (link to recall)	Number of Units	Sold At
Window Covering Safety Council	All Roman shades (25 million) and roll-up blinds (27 million)	Retailers nationwide
Walmart	500,000 Roman shades 600,000 roll-up blinds	Walmart stores and other retailers
JCPenney	More than 2.2 million Roman shades 340 roll-up blinds	JCPenney
Lotus and Windoware	250,000 roll-up Blinds	Ace Hardware and Big Lots
All Strong Industry	290,000 Roman shades	Walmart stores and other retailers
Pottery Barn Stores	350,000 Roman shades 45,000 roller shades	Pottery Barn Kids, Pottery Barn and PBTeens
International Merchandise	355,000 roll-up blinds	Big Lots
West Elm	42,000 Roman shades	West Elm's catalog and website
The Land of Nod	2,000 Roman shades	Land of Nod Stores
Louis Hornick	6,300 Roman shades	Ross stores
Draper	1,800 Roman shades	Specialty window covering dealers nationwide

For more information about the recalled blinds, contact Dawn Mayer, North Dakota Department of Health at 701.328.4536 or visit the CPSC's website at www.cpsc.gov.

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